/2 cont./

●562 [842] The father hopes that his first-born will be a boy, as he sees in him a future helper in herding tasks and a companion on long trips. The maternal family also desires that the first-born be a son because, although he does not hereafter increase the family, beoause of /the system of/ matrilinear descent, he does contribute to its prestige, as on the number of males depends the family prestige and influence, since it is they who represent it in situations of conflict with other groups and who, because of this prestige, make it possible for their relatives to live a more peaceful life by checking the misbehavior of members of other groups with the women of their group, maintaining the peaceful equilibrium of the conjugal life and preserving a mutual respect for the rights and duties of both sides.

Furthermore, on their importance depends, indirectly, the maintenance of their womenfolks' social standing, as no other Guajiro /3/ would become involved in acts of violation or seduction against them for fear of reprisal. Their daughters, rather, will be bought by men of their own social rank, which would eliminate the possibility of their being lowered. Also, should a relative die, the indemnity is more certain, for fear that the group might impose payment and justice by its own might.

However, the male members always present difficulties. The women of the group are always bound by the conduct of the men, for whatever illegal act is committed against another group affects them directly as reprisals are directed against them. On the other hand, when it becomes known that the men [579] are foregathering, the women must be near by, because the men overindulge in rum and under its influence become aggressive and give free rein to their dislikes and hatreds. The women's role then is to try to keep arguments from degenerating into wrangling and bloodshed by endeavoring prudently to patch up such difficulties as they develop.

[583] Furthermore, although it is true that male economic help is the greater in cases where the group requires mutual

/3 cont./
562 co-operation, it is also true that their marriages demand heavy
[563] disbursements from everyone, not only in animals but in jewelry -- gold ornaments -- which a man's female relatives give him to be handed over to his future wife as a sign of the engagement. Also, the children of a man's marriage are not his in our sense of the word, so that in spite of the expense borne by the family, it does not become strengthened by the increase. All the children belong to the maternal family group according to Guajiro law.

[842] The wife concurs with her husband in hoping that her first child will be a son but thereafter hopes for a large family of girls, who will enrich and increase the family group to which they belong with children and marriage payments, for a woman
[811] in Guajiro society has no less importance than a man, as it is she who transmits relationship and, therefore, increases with her offspring the number of consanguineous relatives. In the woman rest the hopes of her relatives for indemnification for the care they gave her in her youth and the maintenance of her social rank, because, on being bought, the eldest daughter indemnifies her father and his family for the expenses they had in livestock and ornaments in buying her mother. The others, with their marriage payments, increase the maternal income and, to a certain extent, augment with this sum the economic backing for future children and for the support of the husband, and form a nest egg to help should any difficult situation of their own or of their family /4/ arise. Moreover, as women have lately been
[797] improving the technique of their handwork by the instruction they receive in the Capuchin mission, and these articles are readily sold in the markets of the interior as well as in the neighboring markets of Valledupar and Maracaibo, the woman really constitutes an important economic force that helps to overcome the precarious financial situation in the home, which is aggravated by the intensely hot summers which do not permit all-season agricultural activity and weaken the livestock. With the revenue so obtained she supports her husband, feeds and clothes herself, her children, and her close relatives.

/4 cont./

562 1977 At the present time the family concept of the woman is changing because of the conduct of mestizo and even pure Indian women brought about by changes in their economic situation and by contact with whites. Gradually, the traditional organization of the marriage payment and fidelity based on the payment is being broken down, because it is the women themselves and not their relatives who receive the payment, and for their [548] activities as prostitutes. The phenomenon is noted not only in the centers of the interior which wave contacts with whites and Negroes -- principally traders and civil authorities -- but also and especially in Maracaibo and some of the towns in the department of Magdalena, to which they have been obliged to emigrate. However, they maintain the family concept of mutual assistance and share their income with their close relatives, not as before in the form of the marriage payment but as income earned in the sex market.

843 Prenatal care and birth. A woman learns that she is pregnant when she feels a loss of appetite and repugnance for food. The later disappearance of the menstrual period confirms the suspicion, and she immediately sees to it that her husband is informed of the event, so that he may know of his coming fatherhood. Also, in the case where she has had extramarital relations [837] in the absence of the husband, the woman, when she feels these early symptoms of pregnancy, goes in search of him, cohabits with him, and later can tell him of her condition, thus avoiding possible later suspicions. From the time of the ending of the first menstrual period, she begins to count the months, and she expects delivery after the eighth month.

Before the arrival of a child, the woman complies with established rules intended to avoid a lengthy and difficult delivery as well as to safeguard the new arrival from sickness which would affect his normal mental and physical well-being. Included in these prescriptions are to be found some of useful and practical value and others with a marked magic aspect. These magic observances generally affect both parents, although some only refer to the woman, /5/ others exclusively to the man (1).

/58 cont./

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182 3. It represents a period of apprenticeship during which she acquires mastery of the general techniques of the culture and the specific ones pertaining to her family.

4. From the knowledge obtained from the past history of her consanguineous family group, the initiate is identified with it, giving rise to the reaffirmation of the bonds of union, as an adult member participating in it.

5. It is a period of preparation for the perfect fulfillment of the socio-physical function of motherhood.

6. Lastly, it constitutes a thorough training in the biological and social functions of the woman in carrying out well her role as a wife. /59/

IV

PREMARITAL CONSIDERATIONS

562 Independence of the man. In the Guajiro family organization the man occupies a privileged position which is apparent from his childhood onward.

The father, as we have seen, hopes that his first-born will be a boy, and the maternal family also cheerfully accepts that wish, as it is the male elements that strengthen and give prestige to the family, who defend it in disputes with other groups, and who can help the group forward as a powerful economic factor.

For these reasons Guajiro boys are reared with more freedom and privileges than girls. In the absence of the father, the eldest son, or in any case the male child, takes the father's place in important matters in the home, being consulted by his mother, who respects his opinion, and he occupies his father's place and has his privileges at meals.

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583 The married man is the head of a new cell, and this im-
885 plies family and social obligations. These he must face up to as a head of a family under peril of loss of prestige and lowering of position. With the coming of children his position becomes more and more extended, as his duties and rights are becoming joined and broadened, for to the obligations of a husband are added those of a father. And these are further complicated on contracting marriages with new women, as then he has reached, according to the Guajiro way of thinking, the maximum development of his male personality.

581 Valuation of virginity and of the woman. The value of
582 the Guajiro woman is fixed by the marriage payment, that is to say, it is the economic assessment of her worth. The conditions of this valuation, traditional among the upper classes (as the lower classes have lost them through socio-economic conditions which even influence those of some standing), may be summarized thus:

581 The physical qualities which make a Guajiro woman
832 desirable are those that comply with the traditional aesthetic norm and are those that the woman after her seclusion (Cf. Initiation of Young Women) makes every endeavor to acquire at any cost: tall stature, balanced by well distributed flesh which gives her an appearance of robustness and full-bodiedness, so that when walking decked out in her ample clothes, she has an appearance both elegant and majestic; wide and robust hips (probably with an unconscious biological end in mind, or a sexual one, or a combination of both); small and upright breasts, as the opposite is considered almost repulsive; and, above all, firm flesh. This last is probably the most desired quality, as the man openly confesses that when his woman over the years loses it, he replaces her by another one who has it. The shape of the legs has no importance, probably because with the full, long dress they are out of sight. In the main, they are thin in relation to the body and frequently bowlegged /?cascorvas/.

/246 cont./

177 resist the pressure exercised on the latter. Changes in the idea of marriage automatically will change: descent, inheritance, interclan relations, the value of women, the education of children, the concept of kinship, the right to land, etc., -- so closely are all these items tied one to the other!

VI

177 As was natural to expect, acculturation has also affected
SC2 the status of women considered as members of the consanguineous group. In the traditional organization, we can say that the preponderant status of the woman within the family is that of mother, who is, so to speak, the second head of the home, after the /247/ maternal uncle who guides and directs the activities of the cell. But this unilateral valuation is being transformed into a double one: that of wife-mother. We will clarify this point. We have seen in the pertinent chapters how a wife's value was determined exclusively by her position, which in turn was determined by the maternal clan to which she belonged. This valuation was materially shown by the high or low payment which a man decided to pay for her on taking her for his wife, in accordance with her clan position. Within the man's clan, relations with the woman were limited to the mutual help given to her husband for her purchase price and their assistance in the preparatory ceremonies of the marriage. But there was no link that tied them to her or to her children, as a consequence of uterine descent. But at the present time the presence of the wife of one of the male members of the clan is taken into account since she now fulfills certain functions which permit her relative incorporation into the clan, or at least into the small family of the husband. On his part, the man has changed his position with regard to her by not looking on her simply as a biological being, but as a companion. For the same reason the status of maternal aunt,

/247 cont./

177 562 in relation to her sister's children, has been weakened in view of the intervention of the paternal aunts, previously unrecognized in relation to their nephews and nieces in the masculine line.

Women, considered simply as a social component, have acquired a higher position owing to the cultural changes that have affected the community due to their contacts with other civilizations. The most important advance, perhaps, is the relative liberalizing of clan rules in their relation to marriage, as the woman does not submit so voluntarily to the husband that her maternal relatives pick for her, but has sufficient strength of will, backed up by actions which are happening with ever greater frequency, to choose her man herself even though this may mean for her the breaking off of all ties which link her to family and clan organization. Furthermore, she acquires with the white marriage institution legal powers to combat polygamy.

VII

654 Having outlined the various influences of acculturation on the individual, on society, and on Guajiro culture, and having sketched in this study the life cycle of the individual and some of the most characteristic social institutions of the community, we can now refer in a general way to the conformation of the status of the native in its different aspects. /248/

The points of reference of individual status of an inhabitant of La Guajira may be summarized as follows:

1. Membership through blood in a powerful clan, and within it being the son of a woman of high position, who is a first wife (remember the presence of polygamy and its conflicts). This implies:

A. Control of sufficient wealth represented by:

a) Numerous heads of livestock, preferably cows and horses.

b) Family jewels set with tuma, the traditional stone; possession of ancient, solid gold or silver idols.

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554 a) Physical qualities. Having a normal physical appearance, that is, conforming to the aesthetic ideal of the group; lack of defects or deformities, such as the lack of a limb or an eye, presence of visible scars, especially on the face, etc., and to be physically strong.

b) Psychic and cultural qualities. Among these qualities the following should be pointed out: 1. Capacity to bear fatigue. 2. Resistance to hunger during times of scarcity, ability to withstand prolonged thirst. 3. Cruel in reprisal. Inflexible in decisions. 4. Vindictive. 5. Spiteful. 6. Proud. 7. Fearless. 8. Introverted as much as possible. 9. Hospitable and generous. 10. Sexually insatiable. 11. A good drinker. 12. A skillful shot. 13. Possession of a life record of numerous wartime and amorous adventures. 14. A good rider. 15. Never having violated the regimen for social stability by murder or robbery. 16. Possession of a perfect understanding of the native language and bilingualism, with oratorical qualities which increases his capacity to convince others in cases when this may be necessary. 17. A clever versifier.

c) Within the division of labor to be able to fill some of the following offices: 1. Shaman. 2. Arbitrator or cacique. 3. Skillful and rich herdsman. 4. Accomplished hunter and fisherman. 5. Good harness maker. 6. Trader. 7. Public employee.

554 562 As to feminine status we can state that it has the same essential points of reference with certain variations due to her sex, which we shall briefly enumerate:

1. Membership by consanguineous ties in a powerful clan with the same characteristics as for the man, which implies:

A. Control of sufficient wealth to maintain personal prestige represented by:

a) Abundant and costly ornaments.
b) Expensive clothes and articles of personal use.
c) Possession of charms, especially those for love.
d) Numerous staff, free or otherwise.

/250 cont./

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e) The services of paid wet nurses to feed her children.

f) Good horses with the corresponding ostentations harness. /251/

g) Her own dwelling apart from that of her husband's other wives.

h) Costly outfit and dowry /on marriage/.

In her relations with her family and with society:

A free and protected childhood, that is, no material obligations to carry out until the prepubertal period.

Rites of passage in accordance with the strictest norms.

Being bought as a first wife with cows and in one payment, at a higher or equal price to that paid for her female ancestors.

Being able to give to her sons /and daughters, hijos/ and nephews /and nieces, sobrinos/ costly jewels when they are about to be married or when they have to compensate someone for an injury inflicted.

To be in a position to send her children to study at civilizado centers.

And all the other /items/ we have seen in the case of men.

B. As in the case of the man, her clan should include numerous males of socio-economic prestige.

Aspects A and B are most important for her both in the family group and in society in the following manner:

In the family group, by enjoying respect and acquiring an outstanding position, which converts her also into the first woman of the family.

In society, by likewise enjoying the respect of the community, by not /becoming involved in the/ violating the code of personal security as it refers to acts of sexual aggression against herself, her female relatives, or her female slaves and bond servants. Besides, by occupying the position of first wife in the marriage and being able to intervene as an arbitrator in interclan disputes, and being able to do her part, as head of the household, in cases of putchi /clan war/.

2. Personal qualities:

/251 cont./

554 a) Physical. As in the case of the man, to have a physique
562 in accord with/the ideals of/ cultural patterns and without outstanding physical defects.

To be sexually attractive.

To be a virgin at marriage.

b) Psychic and cultural qualities. 1. Reserved. 2. Faithful to cultural patterns. 3. Prudent. 4. Respectful. 5. Hospitable and generous. 6. Faithful wife. /252/ 7. Sisterly with her co-wives. 8. Good manager of the home. 9. Affectionate mother. 10. Capable of economic independence. 11. Mastery of the language.

c) Within the framework of the division of labor: to be a shaman or diviner; to have a knowledge of magic, particularly in the making of charms; good midwife, dressmaker, potter, herbalist, or competent maid.

VIII

554 A violation, in active or passive form, of the system of law and order by persons who are unable to pay a satisfactory indemnity for the infraction leads to their being given a special extrasocial status with very clear characteristics. They occupy the lowest place on the social scale. They are the bond servants and slaves whose general characteristics, as we have seen in the chapters referring to them, are:

Lack of family ties, since their consanguineous units have been broken up by their defeat in war as punishment for breaking the cultural rules connected with law and order.

As a consequence, lack of economic backing.

Lack of territorial connections, the land of their consanguineous unit having been taken over by the victors.

Loss of the position of being free, becoming chattel over whom their owners have the right of usufruct and abuse.

/253 cont./

554 548 with respect to social questions as fundamental as marriage, there has been a change in the judgment of prostitution and concubinage, two ways by which a woman escapes from legal strictures, almost always because of necessity or the special circumstances in which her group is placed.

X

554 562 888 We should note here the important fact that the functions ascribed to the working Guajiro woman no longer count when she has passed through her adult change of life, that is to say, when she has passed the menopause. From this moment it appears that she enjoys absolute freedom within the community to do those things that are prohibited a woman before she reaches that condition, such as to become inebriated, to smoke, to indulge in sexual liberties; certain taboos now no longer refer to her, and the cultural patterns need not be so rigorously complied with; she is not obliged to become the wife of the heirs of the dead husband, etc. Her status again becomes effective with all its attached functions after her death, as we shall see.

XI

554 769 775 The active presence of an individual in Guajiro society is not lost at his death. In the concept that these natives have about death, clearly expressed in the study made by my husband to which we have /254/ made reference several times, every member of the community continues being a member of it and exercises influence over his fellow men after his death. His status in the afterlife is determined by the same conditions that he had during his earthly life: the acquiring of greater wealth and of prestige confers a higher status in the world of the spirits.

[32 cont.]

*756 various spirits by one person. They are several spirits associated
775 by this post-mortem relationship which act inseparably in their
787 function as counselors.

It is also very probable that the protector spirits invoked by the shamans may not be anything other than the spirits of famous deceased shamans of times past to whom they turn for aid. In this case they would only have to make a change of name due to the taboo relating to the use of the name of dead persons, which we shall explain in the corresponding chapter.

• • •

114 Before continuing with our subject, we wish to make cer-
171 tain clarifying statements with respect to the presence of women
● 562 in the science of magic in La Guajira and in general among
*756 primitive Americans. We have already seen that among the Guajiro Indians the only basic condition required to become a shaman is what we have called the "revelation," accompanied by the symptoms described earlier. The sex, age, or economic and social position of the person is not taken into account in any way. It is, as we have stated, only necessary to be of a hysterical nature. However, Métraux in his work which we have repeatedly quoted states:

"In tropical South America the profession of shaman appears to be as a general rule reserved for the masculine sex. One does find, however, among many writers reference to women shamans." (26) [Cited in French.] According to these authors

26. Métraux. Op. cit., I, 198.

quoted by Métraux, (Rochefort, Roth, Koch Grünberg, and Ives d'Evreux), women shamans are to be found in the Antilles and among the Tupinamba, Taulipang, Arekuna [Arekena], and Macushi [Macusi].

With reference especially to women shamans in La Guajira, Métraux maintains the following, based on Petrullo's The Yaruros of the Capanaparo River: "Among the Arawak tribe of the Guajiro

[32 cont.]
114 the number of women shamans is greater than that of the men
P11 piai. At the suggestion of these latter, women will enter the
●562 profession following a call from the spirit world and [33] are
*756 initiated into the secrets of their art by an experienced shaman who at night teaches them to handle the rattle and sing their magic songs." (27) [Cited in French.] He likewise quotes cases

27. Métraux. Op. cit., I, 199.

of women shamans among the ancient Mojo Indians of eastern Bolivia and the Itonama, neighbors of those previously mentioned (28), as well as among the Apapocuva (Guaraní), the

28. Métraux. Op. cit., I, 199.

Cobeuo, the Palikur, and the Carajá (29).

29. Métraux. Op. cit., I, 200.

Further on, speaking of the role of women in witchcraft, he says: "With the exception of the passage in Ives d'Evreux..." (relative to the Tupinamba) "there does not exist any description of a shamanistic seance of the current type being directed by a female piai. This hiatus is perhaps due to the poverty of our sources, but it is also revelatory of the real position of women in shamanism. The profession is open to them, but the role they play in it is modest. It appears they limit themselves to simple and easy cures, to various remedies, and to the recital of charms. Women do not usually take part in the invocation of spectacular spirits before the extraction of pathogenic substances. It is certainly not through the effect of simple coincidence that women shamans appear especially in the cultures that have come strongly under European influence (Guajiro, Yaruro, Palikur, Warrau, Itonama, and Guaraní, etc." (30) [Cited in French.]

30. Métraux. Op. cit., I, 200.

[33 cont.]

114 117 562 *756 We do not wish to question Professor Métraux's statement about the influence of White contact in relation to medicine-women in the other groups cited by him, as we are not objectively acquainted with them. But with regard to the Guajiro, we have to make the clarification that in the descriptions collected by us in the field, it is precisely the woman who really initiates magic, or better said shamanism, among the Indians, when she obliges her nephew to follow her own career. This aspect can be better understood when the reader comes to the section of this chapter entitled "The shaman in oral literature." [174] The fact that women appear as shamans in oral literature demonstrates the antiquity of the institution, as this literature faithfully preserves the most remote traditions of the group.

*756 The shaman, man of two worlds. All that we have seen in connection with the life cycle of the Guajiro shaman makes us think that he is what we have called him in the subtitle that heads these paragraphs: a man of two worlds — the world of the living and the world of the spirits of the dead. [34]

*756 554 The communication which he establishes after all the preparatory ceremonies with one or several protector spirits who lavish on him every kind of counsel and instruction and even protect him against evil in all its manifestations: illness, enemies, public calamities, etc., make of him a man distinct from all the rest. His status is superior to that of other mortals because in his hands he has power over both good and evil. It is this duality that binds with his science a man who is both sacred and human, a being respected by all but feared at the same time, a good man, able to cure illnesses, but also a malignant being, liable to let loose the fury of the spirits beyond the grave. He is respected, loved, feared, and even, we might dare to say, profoundly hated.

[783] What predominates in him above all is the characteristic of impurity due to contamination from death. Sacred and impure become confounded in him; he is sacred because he is untouchable, and he is untouchable because of his participation with death through his protector spirits.

*756 His dual position as inhabitant of two worlds, involuntary it is true, depends on two fundamentally simple facts: first, his

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13

88 [868] weaving, making dresses, hammocks, sashes, &c., sewing, and all the little knick-knacks Indians love so well.

The confinement is not so isolated as it seems, generally several of her female relations are round the door with the enclosed, who of course becomes rather stout, much blanched, almost white, and some exceedingly beautiful. Strangers and men are not excluded from peeping in through [584] the door, always with an eye to matrimony, and she can be sold and liberated at once, though her husband if rich prefers leaving her to complete her term of schooling. On re-entering to society again, a special festival, *ahuitis*, is held with dancing, &c. An ox is killed, and the girl is dressed in the clothes she has made; her hair is cut and she resumes all her beads, necklaces, bracelets, and other ornaments.

562 [579] Women are much respected by the Goajiros. In a quarrel or drunken brawl, women often save bloodshed by stopping in and tearing the weapons out of their husband's or brother's hand. Travelling with women is consequently perfectly safe, and in case of danger, if one undertakes to protect a stranger, he may rely upon coming out all right.

583 Matrimony is a mere case of barter. The girl is sold for a certain price, fixed by the father. This is paid by the intended husband, and divided by the father, who appropriates the best part for himself and his relations, the rest going to the wife's relations. As it is chiefly in 585 cattle, these are killed and a kind of bridal festival held. There is no other ceremony. A wife is under obligation to support her husband, 593 find him in food, clothes, &c. She does most of the trading, and a [462] contract made with an Indian is worthless, should his better half object. An Indian cannot inflict bodily injury on his wife, for he becomes liable [583] to her relations, and should she die during childbirth he has to repay the father what he gave for her. But if the wife is untrue (a rare occurrence) [684] he demands from the father the price he paid for her, who if he cannot refund, helps him to recover from the seducer, plus tear or compensation from his mother-in-law. At the husband's death, the 587 wife becomes a legacy to his brother, usually the youngest; if there are 764 none, then his nephew inherits her. The daughter of a chief is worth, 583 according to his wealth and power (i. e. the number of men he can dispose of in a fight) from 6 to 150 head of cattle (12*l.* to 300*l.*).

764 When a person dies, a grand drinking festival is given, that lasts as long as there is anything to drink—days, and even weeks, with the wealthy. These latter are buried twice, and have two festivals. A rich person is always buried in the rancho, and on the spot where he was born; being often carried for that purpose immense distances. A fire is lighted every night from sunset to sunrise in front of the grave, for the sole use of the dead. Immense piles of wood are gathered for this purpose, as the body is kept two years in the house. Then all the relations can meet on a certain day, and the second feast takes place, when the bones are carefully gathered, placed in a jar, and consigned to the

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
SC13 Goajiro SC13

or 16 years old—and it is entirely up to Ramoncito to find a suitable mate for her. As yet there is no prospective bridegroom but when he is found he will be entirely Ramoncito's choice. Ramoncito may seek the advice of Estrella's parents, but the final say rests with him. Even the girl has little or nothing to do with the selection. Ramoncito will settle the bride price and collect it all for himself. He will not share it with his other brothers nor will the girl's parents receive any part of it. Ramoncito concerns himself greatly about Estrella and seldom lets a day pass without paying her a visit. Estrella comes to visit her uncle quite frequently too, either alone—for they live close by—or with her mother, and she always brings a little gift for Ramoncito's only child. Ramoncito has another sister whose daughter is already married. In this case it was Ramoncito again who made all the arrangements for the marriage, selecting a wealthy bridegroom, settling the bride price, and collecting it. He kept all of it for himself as he is supposed to do. None of the other relatives had anything to say regarding the marriage.

The following is another case, one from a different level of society. Carmelina is the daughter of a poor man who lives at San Antonio. She has only one maternal uncle, who is also poor. About a year ago her uncle insisted upon her marrying the bridegroom whom he had already selected for her. The bride price was arranged and collected by her uncle, but he being a wasteful man—according to Carmelina—went to Venezuela, sold the cattle there and spent all of his money. Since that time this uncle has been trying to get some cattle from Carmelina's husband, but, as he has no further claim on his niece, they have refused him. Carmelina, apparently is happy in her marriage and glad to be out of her uncle's reach. He pays frequent visits to his niece, but as he is received with cool indifference his visits are less frequent than they used to be.

Now for the actual pattern of behavior. The present writer was able to observe personally the mode of behavior between Estrella and Ramoncito and between Carmelina and her uncle. Let us take Estrella's case first. Apart from the fact that in the Guajira whenever we find a mixed group the women in-

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
SC13 Goajiro SC13

[562] variably stay somewhat in the background, the attitude of
604 Estrella in the presence of her uncle is not marked by that stiff formality so obvious in the attitude of Ilaro and his uncle. She shows no signs of disrespect, but on the other hand she is perfectly free to interrupt her uncle whenever she feels like doing so and nobody can criticize her. This she does not do frequently, but during the course of the conversation which the present writer observed she interrupted him twice with no apparent annoyance or disapproval on the part of Ramoncito. His attitude toward her was very much the same. Respect is shown by both, but that marked formality that is so apparent in the uncle-nephew relations is lacking. This may possibly be due to the fact that the nephew is of course the receiver of benefits — theoretically at least — and consequently must show great respect in the way of a stiff formality in order not to anger his uncle, while in the other case the uncle receives benefits through his niece, and although she cannot override her uncle altogether [562] because of the general backwardness of women in the Guajira, rigid formality, at least, is absent. This interpretation was checked up with the native informants, to discover if possible their own views. The matter was found to be far from clear in their minds, but they were all of the opinion that the above economic considerations, may be a factor in explaining the presence of the rigid formality in one case and its absence in the other.

In the case of Carmelina the situation is somewhat different. Although there were no outward signs of disrespect shown by either Carmelina or her uncle, there was no sign at all of affection between them, especially on the part of Carmelina. She treated her uncle very coldly, seldom addressed him and paid little attention to what he said. The writer had been working with Carmelina and her husband all one morning and was to stay [574] that day and night with them. Around midmorning the uncle joined the group but was not invited to stay for dinner, although on several occasions he tried to get himself invited. After he left both Carmelina and her husband spoke sharply about her uncle. The writer was unfortunately unable to contact the uncle and get his opinion on the matter. Nevertheless, it is apparently safe to conclude that while the relations between

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

583 614 man cannot immediately pay any worthwhile part of the bride-price. The young man may then abduct the girl with the tacit consent of her parents, and thereby postpone having to pay the bride-price. After some time, the girl's relatives will require payment, but meantime his family will have been trying to scrape together at least a first instalment.

Genuine abduction does occur occasionally, but only when the man knows that the girl's clan is weak and that her relatives will thus have difficulty in claiming their rights. He will take the girl as far away as possible. If he is caught, her relatives will try to demand a bride-price. Perhaps he is already tired of the girl by then and wants to return her. She is the clan's property and is not being returned un-
583 damaged, so the man must pay damages for seduction and,
565 if the girl is pregnant, also for childbirth.

614 684 In the lower classes that would dispose of the matter. The baby would in any event be taken into the mother's clan and have her name. In the upper classes a girl would be turned out if she had had such an accident and the considerable damages required had not been paid immediately. The clan's prestige cannot be allowed to suffer.

Indian girls never keep a seducer's name secret, but at once tell their family who he is.

Among the lower classes cases of wives eloping are said to occur. The man to whom they have gone can legalize the position by paying compensation to the husband. If the husband agrees to do a deal, he cannot ask as much as the bride-price he himself paid, for the girl is by then less valuable.

560 583 It follows from all this that a woman has not the right to dispose of her own body. She belongs to her mother's family until she marries, and her closest relatives must be compensated for any injury done her. Once the man has paid the bride-price she becomes his property. If she is [768] widowed, she is inherited along with the rest of his effects by his nephews (sister's sons) and she has to purchase her freedom from them, paying a sum equivalent to the bride-price less what she is held to have lost in value since mar-

riage.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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riage. A Guajiro woman has no right to sell her body. The law does not recognize prostitution.

A married woman's relatives and clan do not leave her entirely in her husband's hands. He may not do as he likes with her, nor cause her suffering. Suffering and discomfort she is bound to experience in childbirth, however, and of that he is the primary cause; thus whether as a result of legal or illegal relations, the man must compensate the mother for her confinement by giving her family a few cattle. The woman herself may not eat their meat under any circumstances.

Originally the Guajiro clans were exogamous; members were not allowed to marry within the clan. That is no longer insisted upon, but not only brothers and sisters, but maternal males and cousins on the mother's side, are still reckoned among the forbidden degrees. It is unthinkable that an Indian girl should marry her maternal uncle; that would be like having her father for her husband. It once happened that an uncle and niece had a secret relationship and the girl became pregnant. A monk married them, but the Indians regarded the relationship as a heinous crime and the whole district reacted so violently that the couple had to leave the peninsula and go far away, where there was no risk of meeting members of their tribe.

There is nothing to prevent an Indian getting himself several wives. Infrequently white men have married into Guajiro families and they too have had to pay a bride-price. A number of poor Creoles have contracted Guajiro marriages with poor girls. I have already mentioned how foreign oil workers made Guajiro marriages. In those early days there were no arrangements made for employees' families, and the Guajiro girls suited those primitive conditions very well, though as a rule such marriages with Indian girls were very short-lived, as those of the Creoles with them still are. The girl is soon abandoned, if that can be done without risk, the girl's family in such cases being powerless. So the Indians told me.

The monks had already told us that where Creoles had married Guajiro girls of good family, those marriages had

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
SC13 Goajiro SC13

586 minus an amount considered equivalent for the sexual right he had exer-
[845 cised. If a woman dies in her first childbirth the husband may demand
583] the full return of the bride price (Simons, 1885, p. 792, however, states that the wife's relatives demand compensation from the husband).
586 Adultery entails divorce with full return of the bride price. It rarely
837 occurs, however, as the wife will be treated badly by her own relatives.
587 At his death a man's wives are inherited by his brother, and next by his
768 sister's sons; the women may avoid this by making a payment equivalent
184 to their bride price. If he is of the Catholic faith his children may claim to be his legal heirs, which leads to conflict with the maternal nephews. (See Social Organization, p. 374.)

●562 The influence of women in political affairs is sometimes noticeable.
622 There are cases of female chiefs, and women are respected enough so as to be able to intervene and stop brawls.

764 **Death.**—Funerals are accompanied by festivities which last days or even
[558 weeks, according to the wealth of the family. There are some differences
184] in the funeral ceremonies which are apparently associated with the particular sibs. These funeral feasts afford the best opportunity for display of wealth, and more than 1,000 head of livestock may be butchered. Every mourner who comes to the feast contributes animals for slaughter and continues to do so as long as he cares to remain. After the mourning period, marked by weeping and lamenting interspersed with drinking and feasting, the corpse, which has lain in a hammock slung from the rafters,
[784 is sewn up in hides by the women (men may not touch a dead body)
and carried to the cemetery of the tribe. For a year or so, the body may be temporarily consigned to a shallow grave marked by a pile of stones. Food and drink are often placed in the grave, and, if the deceased had been
764 a warrior, his bows and arrows are put in. A year or two later the bones
765 are exhumed and reburied in a large urn. The exhumation is generally done at night and is accompanied by a feast. The remains are carried in a funeral procession to the dead person's birthplace, where they are buried in the family's own cemetery. The funeral urn is placed in a vertical position with the narrow neck of the jar protruding above ground to permit the free entry and exit of the spirit and to allow the remains of other members of the family to be added from time to time. A cactus hedge surrounds the cemetery, and in wet weather half a calabash is placed over the opening of each jar to keep out the rain. Whenever two relatives of a recently deceased person meet, they bow to the ground, shouting and groaning, for several minutes. (For a slightly different account of the burial of a rich man, see Simons, 1885, p. 792.)

751 If a person is stricken with smallpox the whole tribe moves away, only
766 the family of the sick person remaining. When the death occurs they bury the body below the floor and burn the hut over the grave.